

COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The responsible commercial activity is about ensuring the economic success of an organization, through social and environmental considerations included in its activity, so that the organization could adequately manage the impact of environmental processes and solve all the problems of the community. In other words, the responsible commercial activity means to satisfy the **customer** requests, who want a reliable supplier with a good reputation for quality products and services while taking care also of the expectations of other people, such as **suppliers** wishing to sell to a customer that will return to buy again and will pay on time; **employees** who want to work for a company they are proud of and who can appreciate their contribution and **community** that wants to be sure the business operates in a responsible manner, socially and environmentally.

The link between commercial activity and sustainable development is complex and can be both positive and negative. Through its potential to sustain the economic growth, commercial activity contributes to sustainable development, but it can have a negative effect when its positive effects are outweighed by the increased pollution.

Concerns about providing commercial activity in accordance with sustainable development have become more persistent, especially in a globalized economy and increasingly broad recognition of the interaction between nature and society, which resulted in the formulation of new requirements from customers, local communities, regulators, banks, financiers and insurance providers. Given these new circumstances, more and more organizations are interested in improving the operation, so that it can contribute to the general good of the community.

Articles submitted to the journal, the ones that address the topic of Commercial activity and sustainable development, highlight the fact that responsible commercial activity has an added value for both business and society because it involves aspects of environmental protection, being also a means to achieve sustainable development.

The paper **"Responsible commercial activity of SMEs and specific values of sustainable development in terms of the European excellence model"** underlines part of the research, based on a survey results conducted on SMEs in Romania between 2007-2008, namely on the satisfaction degree of the requirements of society for the protection of life, health and environment. The evaluation of these requirements is considered by the authors Marieta Olaru, Vasile Dinu, Ghiorghiță Stoleriu, Diana Șandru and Violeta Dincă, in terms of an integrated approach to sustainable development values in the model EFQM European Excellence as defined by the European Foundation for Quality Management.

The article proposed by Dumitru Miron, Alina Mihaela Dima and Simona Vasilache **"Models of the intra-regional trade influence in economic sustainable development in Romania"**, estimates the impact of regional trade between Romania and the EU (imports and exports) on sustainable development using dynamic forecasting and vector auto-regression (VAR) methods. To underline the relationship between trade and sustainable development, the authors analyzed the GDP per capita and employment rate, because they are the main indicators reflecting sustainable development. The analysis proposes a reliable method of forecasting the dependencies between GDP growth, employment rate fluctuations and import-export balance, which can help decision makers in defining development strategy of foreign trade, amid intensifying intra-regional trade.

Basarab Gogoneață studies long-term relationship between commercial activity and an indicator of sustainable development, respectively the adjusted net savings (genuine savings) for the ten ex-communist countries, which joined the EU in recent years. The originality of the article **"Long-run relationship between commerce and sustainable development in Baltic and Central and Eastern European countries"** consists in applying the co-integration testing techniques for a panel data on trade and "authentic" savings rate, which is a proxy for the evolution national wealth that will be inherited by future generations.

The purpose of the article **"Carbon-footprint policy of the top ten global retailers: contribution to sustainable development"** written by Carmen Bălan, is to study issues related to reducing carbon-footprint for the most prominent retailers worldwide. Carbon-footprint policy is a new challenge faced by global retailers, because it is part of the environmental component of organizational policy for sustainable development. The research has an exploratory character and is based on the objectives, strategies and achievements of the top ten global retailers, in the field of carbon- footprint.

In the context of the unprecedented growth of towns, one of the essential components – distribution, through all trade companies - had a major impact on the configuration and urban modeling. Neglecting the essential analysis factors for the present situation or neglecting forecasting the development of urban facilities, such as commercial network, causes major problems with direct impact on living conditions and habitat. The article **"Commercial facilities and urban regeneration"**, having as authors Ana-Lucia Ristea, Valeriu Ioan-Franc, Ion Stegăroiu and Gabriel Croitoru, broaches a model for assessing disparities in the development of commercial facilities.

In the article **"Commercialization of holidays in the protected natural areas – form of the sustainable development in tourism"**, the authors, Rodica Minciu, Delia Popescu, Mihaela Pădurean, Remus Hornoiu and Andreea Băltărețu, conducted a field research, with the purpose of identifying concerns and ways of tourism exploitation of protected areas, covering both potential tourists and travel agencies, the main link in the marketing of holiday packages. The research highlighted on the one hand, benefits and vacations in protected areas, on the other hand, growing interest of tourists to this kind of vacation. The future needs a deeper involvement of tourism agencies but also of protected natural areas administration in their promotion, recovery and sustainable development

The purpose of the work **"Implications of commercial activity within monastic settlements as a way to maintain the sustainable development of religious tourism in Romania"** is to investigate the contributions which an increased number of visitors might have on religious settlements and the pertaining communities in Romania, in terms of compliance with sustainable development principles and to identify the role that the commercial activity plays within religious settlements and how it affects the environment's components, from the point of representatives of religious tourist supply. The authors, Gabriela Cecilia Stănciulescu and Alexandra-Maria Țîrcă, show that religious tourism, through its commercial side, can help, with certain restrictions, the sustainable development of religious host communities in Romania.

The article **"The perceptions of students specializing trade, tourism and services on the importance of the concept of sustainable development in commercial activities"**, presents a study made by the authors Niță Valentin and Agheorghiesei Daniela Tatiana, aimed to identify how students who graduated specialized studies at the University

„Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University in Iasi, perceive the concept of sustainable development and current concerns of managers on its application in trade, if they have mastered specific knowledge and skills and if they feel that in their future jobs as merchants and decision makers in commercial activity, they will be able to consider strategies for sustainable development. Also, a special issue of the article is linked to the perception of the university's role in supporting the sustainable development concept, by choosing disciplines, subjects taught, the knowledge transmitted and topics of debate.

In the article **"Commercial activity's contribution to sustainable development by social responsibility actions: a vision of SMEs"**, authors, Rodica Milena Zaharia, Alin Stancu, Carmen Stoian and Mihaela Diaconu, present the results of a qualitative research conducted among small and medium-sized companies involved in commercial activity in Bucharest, to illustrate the way in which their actions social responsibility activities meet the national strategy for sustainable development.

Price is a basic variable of the marketing mix, and fair pricing is one of the principles underlying sustainable marketing, reflecting a long-run orientation of the company. By pursuing this line of decision, the commercial enterprise increases the value offered to its customers and becomes more socially responsible. In the paper **"Setting fair prices - fundamental principle of sustainable marketing"** authors, Iacob Cătoiu, Diana Maria Vrânceanu and Alina Filip, highlight specific issues concerning the contribution of price to sustainable development.

Increasing environmental performance became a more and more prominent requirement in all areas. Its accomplishment is made within the framework of changes promoted by governmental environmental policies and it is still featured by many uncertainties. In the paper **„Internal drivers of environmental performance. Case study: the trading activity"** authors, Florina Bran, Ildiko Ivan and Valentina Carmen Rădulescu, aimed to reduce these uncertainties by identifying the internal drivers of environmental performance, testing a number of prior assumptions and empirical findings on a sample of ISO 14 001 certified commercial companies

A sustainable development commercial activity is essential to maintain the economic success and to achieve commercial advantage through the reputation and confidence of those working or living around the company. This means contributing positively to society and managing the environmental impact of business.

**Editor-in-Chief,
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